DEFENDING OUR NATION AND ALLIES

DEFENDING the nation – protecting the lives of the American people – lies at the heart of the cryptologic mission. During WWII, signals intelligence helped defeat German U-boats in the North Atlantic and win the Battle of Midway in the Pacific, while the ability to protect U.S. communications through encryption provided by Native American Code Talkers and devices such as the SIGABA kept the enemy in the dark about Allied plans. These successes hastened victory for the Allies and the end of the conflict.

The National Security Agency was established in response to the lessons learned from WWII. While the threats have changed over the years, NSA has evolved and continues to transform in the face of an ever-changing global environment. Through its dual missions to provide and safeguard vital national security information, NSA is committed to protecting the lives of the American people at home and abroad, warning of impending threats to the nation and our allies, supporting and protecting U.S. and allied troops in harm's way, and protecting our national leaders as they travel into hostile regions. This commitment – defending our nation and our allies – is central to the everyday activities of the men and women of NSA.

COMBATING TERRORISM

Terrorism is a global threat, with groups dispersed around the world, blending into civil society, and utilizing every possible means of communication to recruit new members, facilitate the movement of people and money, and plan and conduct operations. Defeating these enemies starts with the challenge of finding them – both physically and virtually.

The mission, skills, and technology of NSA are uniquely suited to this challenge. Because of the reliance of terrorist groups on modern computing technology and the global communications network, NSA's signals intelligence personnel can collect and analyze information revealing terrorist locations and intentions, while information assurance helps to protect our most important communications, as well as those of our partners, from enemy exploitation.

SUPPORTING THE MILITARY

NSA's role as a combat support agency has been demonstrated repeatedly throughout its sixty-plus year history. Thousands of NSA personnel, both military and civilian, have deployed into harm's way to provide critical intelligence and information assurance products and services to warfighters. Secure communications can be a life-or-death issue in a war zone, and NSA has provided robust mobile communications to tactical operators and military leaders. "Real Time Regional Gateways" are classified network portals that allow U.S. military and coalition partners to analyze enemy communications through advanced analytic capabilities and rapidly fuse data from multiple intelligence sources in near-real-time, providing support to military operations.

DEFENDING NETWORKS

Our nation's leaders have agreed that freedom of access and movement in cyberspace is a national security priority, and throughout its history, NSA has been a leader in this area. As the United States has become increasingly dependent on global information technology and networks for both personal and national business, NSA's role as a leader in understanding, identifying, and mitigating vulnerabilities in cyberspace is increasingly important. Partnering across government, and collaborating with allies and the private sector, NSA protects national security systems and shares information appropriately on threats and vulnerabilities to those systems. ■